



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/637,087	07/31/2003	Man Mohan Rai	ARC-14281-3	9091
25186	7590	03/22/2006	EXAMINER	
NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER ATTN: PATENT COUNSEL MAIL STOP 202A-4 MOFFETT FIELD, CA 94035-1000			HIRL, JOSEPH P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2129	
DATE MAILED: 03/22/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/637,087

Applicant(s)

RAI ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph P. Hirl

Art Unit

2129

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 July 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-9 are pending in this application.

Specification Objection

2. Specification @ page 1, lines 5-6, does not cite the current cross reference.

Delete "Applications No. 09/374,491" and insert –No. 6,606,612–.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. § 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for nonstatutory subject matter.

The computer system must set forth a practical application that § 101 judicial exception to produce a real-world result. Benson, 409 U.S. at 71-72, 175 USPQ at 676-77. The invention is ineligible because it has not been limited to a substantial practical application. A solution consisting of methodology involving a composite response surface using neural networks and selected functions is useless in a real world situation.

In determining whether the claim is for a "practical application," the focus is not on whether the steps taken to achieve a particular result are useful, tangible and concrete." If the claim is directed to a practical application of the § 101 judicial

exceptions producing a result tied to the physical world that does not preempt the judicial exception, then the claim meets the statutory requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101.

The terms “providing”, “applying”, “forming”, “selecting”, “choosing”, and “computing” merely identify conditions of a process but fail to establish a tangible result ... abstractness does not satisfy § 101 requirements.

The invention must be for a practical application and either:

- 1). specify transforming (physical thing – article) or
- 2). have the Final Result (not the steps) achieve or produce a
useful (specific, substantial AND creditable),
concrete (substantially repeatable/ non-unpredictable), AND
tangible (real world/ non-abstract) result
(tangibility is the opposite of abstractness).

A claim that is so broad that it reads on both statutory and non-statutory subject matter, must be amended, and if the specification discloses a practical application but the claim is broader than the disclosure such that it does not require the practical application, then the claim must be amended.

Claims that, identify abstract parameters, cite steps of a process, form a function, provide an objective function and compute training error values are not statutory. Further, the mere applying of a model without citing a specific tangible result is non-statutory.

Conclusion

4. The prior art of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Krivokapic et al, USPN 5,966,527
- Fu, USPN 5,541,651
- Higuerey et al, USPN 6,850,874
- Krivokapic et al, USPN 6,304,836
- Tsai, USPN 5,781,430

5. Claims 1-9 are rejected.

Correspondence Information

6. Any inquiry concerning this information or related to the subject disclosure should be directed to the Primary Examiner, Joseph P. Hirl, whose telephone number is (571) 272-3685. The Examiner can be reached on Monday – Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, David R. Vincent can be reached at (571) 272-3080.

Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

Washington, D. C. 20231;

Hand delivered to:

Art Unit: 2129

Receptionist,

Customer Service Window,

Randolph Building,

401 Dulany Street,


Alexandria, Virginia 22313,

(located on the first floor of the south side of the Randolph Building);

or faxed to:

(571) 273-8300 (for formal communications intended for entry.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have any questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).


P. E.
Joseph P. Hirl
Primary Examiner
March 15, 2006